



February 17, 2011

Situational Awareness and Your Safety: "Be Tuned In!"

Practicing situational awareness in everything you do helps prevent personal injury. Awareness of your surroundings allows you to identify and prepare for dangerous hazards before an incident results. "Tuning out" or not paying attention to one's surroundings minimizes the ability to quickly recognize and avoid a threat (hazard) to your safety. *Apathy, denial and complacency can all be deadly!* The five levels of situational awareness are:



Tuned Out: Not paying attention to surroundings

- Working in familiar environments, engrossed in thought, or phone calls/texting
- Least effective against recognizing and avoiding incidents from occurring

Relaxed Awareness: Normal condition of paying attention to surroundings

- Relaxed but still observant of your surroundings
- Preferred awareness condition a majority of the time, but it is very easy to slip into a tuned-out condition

Focused Awareness: Carefully observing for potential dangers

- Best when working under hazardous conditions
- Demands continuous concentration that can be tiring and stressful over time

High Alert: Confirmed threat; action on your part required

- Results in an adrenaline rush
- High alert can be scary, but helps one maintain the ability to function (react)
- The human body can tolerate only short periods of high alert before becoming physically and mentally exhausted

Comatose: State of shock

- Panic-induced paralysis; can't react to the reality of the situation
- The likely reaction to a serious threat or incident when a person is "tuned out" just prior to the incident or event
- It is very difficult to go from tuned out to high alert

RECOMMENDATION: *Relaxed awareness* should be practiced in most situations with the exception of using *focused awareness* during operations in dangerous/hazardous conditions. The state of *relaxed awareness* can be maintained indefinitely without the stress and fatigue associated with *focused awareness* or *high alert*. While in the *relaxed awareness* state, you can easily adjust to increased awareness when needed. *Relaxed awareness* can decrease the need to elevate to *high alert* because identified hazards can be avoided at an earlier stage.

Practicing these awareness levels at the appropriate times increases personal safety. Additionally, when *the team is all tuned in together*, situational awareness increases the safety level for everyone.

Safety Days Schedule

Tuesday, Feb. 22

Initial CPR/AED
Internal Certification
OHF, Room 1116
1 p.m.

(Registration Required)

Thought to Ponder

More than 3.1 million workers in the United States had an OSHA recordable injury in 2009.

Of those, 965,000 lost at least one day of work.

4,340 people died in work-related incidents.

243 workers died from a work-related incident in the state of Florida alone.

How many of those workers thought even for a moment that they would not return home in the same condition they left or even return at all?

So what makes you think that it can never happen to you???

Sign of the Week



If you have questions, comments, or a topic you would like to see addressed:
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